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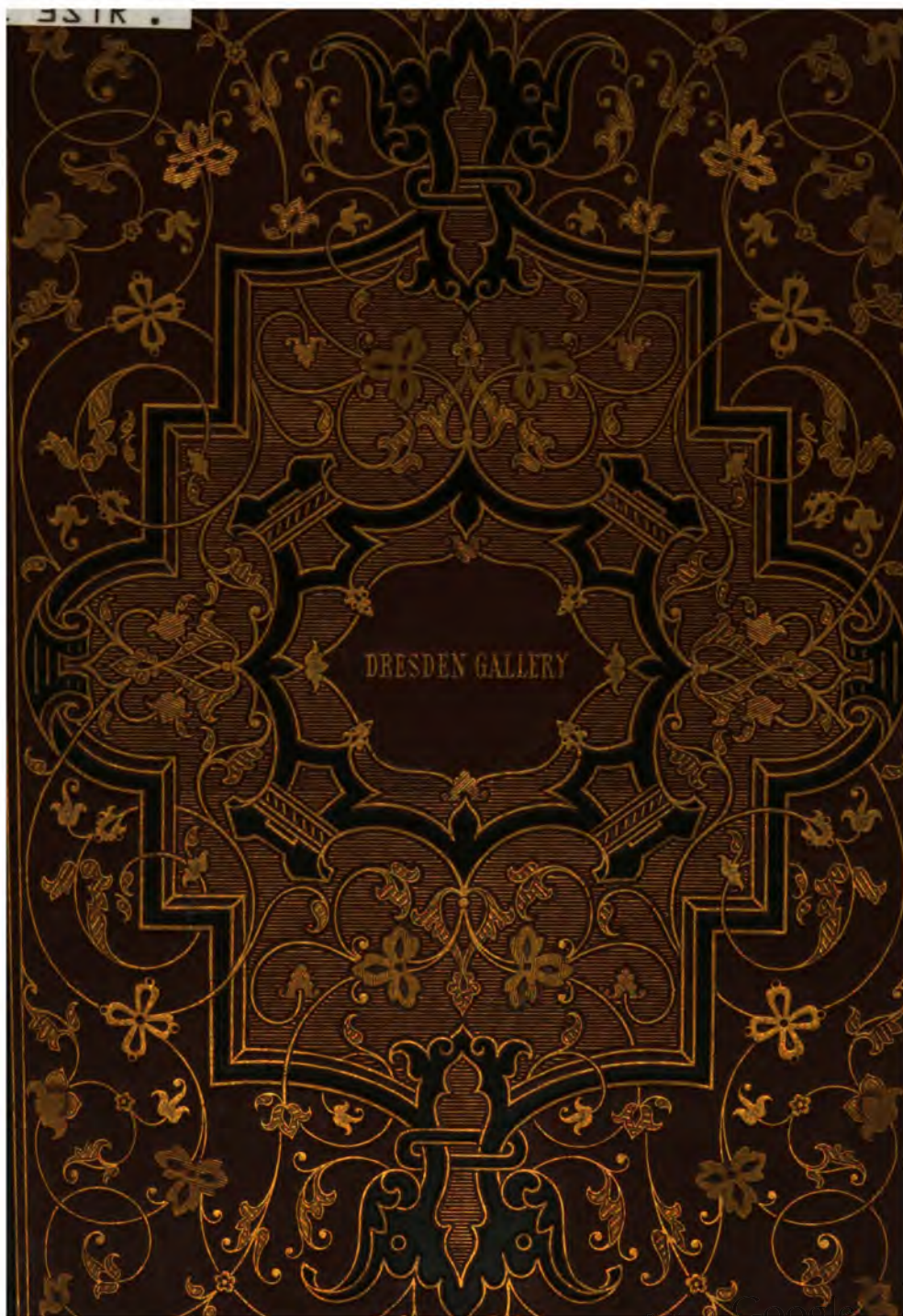
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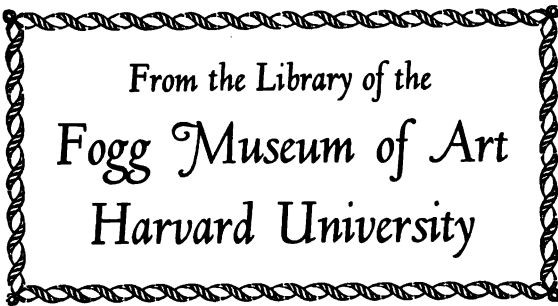
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THE
DRESDEN GALLERY
IN
PHOTOGRAPHS AFTER THE ORIGINAL PICTURES

WITH COMMENTS THEREON BY

JULIUS HÜBNER

DIRECTOR OF THE ROYAL PICTURE GALLERY IN DRESDEN.

TRANSLATED BY J. POND.

STROEFER & KIRCHNER.

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Madonna di San Sisto, by Raphael.

(Cat. No. 67. On canvas, 2,65 high, 1,69 wide.)

The Virgin Mary with the Infant Christ borne up by clouds. On her right, St. Sixtus in a kneeling posture; on her left, St. Barbara. Below, two cherubs. In the background between two green curtains, a glory of angelic heads.

This world renowned picture, the gem of the Dresden Gallery was, according to Vasari, painted for the High Altar of the Benedictine Convent of S. Sisto in Piacenza probably in 1518, and purchased in that place for Augustus III., King of Saxony through the painter Carlo Cesari Giovannini in 1753 for 20,000 ducats, or 40,000 Roman scudi, — about 60,000 Thalers. Since its removal to Dresden, the admiration of this immortal work has increased from year to year, and it is rightly regarded as the most ideal creation in the whole range of painting.

On clouds enthroned, the Virgin and the Infant
With looks of earnest love, the world are greeting;
The earth in cloud enshrouded lies beneath them,
And veil and vesture float in heavenly breezes.

Humbly, St. Barbara, on bended knee, inclineth
Her beauteous head, in humble adoration;
St. Sixtus lifts his eyes, by faith transfigured
In holy trust that man with God finds favour.

And with the angels let us too look upward;
In tuneful choirs resound His praise eternal,
Who took the form of man for our salvation.

So Raphael, thou, the angel of the announcement,
So saw'st thou her, and thus may we regard her,
«The Queen of Heaven, and the Queen of women!»



The Virgin with the Family of Burgomaster Meyer, by Hans Holbein, the Younger.

(Cat. No. 1809. On wood, 1,60 high, 1,045 wide.)

This celebrated picture was painted for Jacob Meyer, Burgomaster of Basel, whose family it represents as being under the protection of the Virgin Mary. On the right of the Virgin, kneel the father and his two sons (the youngest, a naked child); opposite to them, his wife Dorothea Kannengiesser with her mother and daughter. This beautiful painting was for a long time in Venice, and purchased there by order of King Augustus III. of Saxony, by Count Algarotti, Sept. 4th 1743 of Mr. Zuane Dolfino for 1000 sequins, whence it came to the Dresden Gallery. When in 1871 our picture was placed side by side with the so called Darmstadt picture of the same subject in the possession of Her Royal Highness, Princess Carl von Hessen, the formerly expressed doubts as to the genuineness of our painting were strengthened, and it was pronounced by many learned connoisseurs to be a later copy, while, on the other hand, equally celebrated authorities, especially among artists, were of the opinion that it is an original work. There is, however, no proof of the exact truth of either assertion, and it must be left as heretofore to each to decide for himself as to the correctness of either opinion.

A picture of the good old time — the pious
Earth's purest flower here charms the eye delighted,
Bright prototype to us of love maternal,
Maria! guardian of the earthly household.

The mother with her heavenly Child is present,
Protectress of the father, mother, children;
Her mantle shields them wrapt in adoration,
And now in deep repose all fear is banished.

With folded hands they kneel in silent worship,
Each for the others' welfare humbly pleading;
Where love resides all sin has been forgiven,

There must the house become a silent temple;
And here thou showest us on earth a heaven,
Thou German master, in simple German manner.



Magdalene, by Pompeo Battoni.

(Cat. No. 129. On canvas, 1,20 high, 1,86 wide.)

Though Raphael's Madonna is doubtless the most celebrated picture of the Dresden Gallery, the Magdalene by Battoni is no less certainly the greatest favourite among all the works of this rich collection. The picture has been so constantly copied, and continues to be so, that it is literally never free, never occupies its somewhat elevated position over the door, but is always to be seen, rather more advantageously for the observer, on a frame near the window. This pleasing, captivating work resembles the melodies of certain Italian operas, which, without great depth in themselves, so charm the ear of the listener that, involuntarily, he constantly repeats them, and thus they become general favourites. The beautiful penitent reposes with such seductive modesty and with a perfection of art by no means to be undervalued, in so pleasing a position that the charmed eye of the spectator, with ever renewed pleasure, involuntarily follows the tender flow of the lines, the soft curves of the limbs, and the melting carnation of the complexion which contrasts so beautifully with the delicate blue of the costume, and the obscurity of the picturesque cave.

The fair one has, in the zeal of her penitence, so skilfully laid aside not only her worldly ornaments but also all superfluous costume, that the full charm of her maiden beauty more than compensates for the absence of magnificent toilette. Were she not a saint, the profane thought might arise that all this might have been the result of a studied attempt to captivate the observer. However, why should that concern us, she is indeed charming, and deserves the favour with which she is so universally regarded. It is interesting to compare this creation of Battoni with Correggio's Magdalene which must have suggested many particulars to the painter and we shall refer to this comparison when speaking of Correggio's work.



Magdalene, by Correggio.

(Cat. No. 153. On copper, 0.29 high, 0.39 wide.)

This extremely peculiar picture has always exercised an especial charm on the observer, and it is well known that its former possessors, the Dukes of Modena, were even accustomed to take it with them in a case arranged for that purpose on their journeys, that they might not be for a moment deprived of the pleasure of regarding the beloved object. If we must admit that this picture, like all the works of this master was, in the last century, really overestimated, it is no less true that at the present time, on the contrary, it is too often as much underestimated by connoisseurs and artists. The great impression that these pictures produced at once on their first appearance and has ever since been repeated, is best and most naturally explained by the circumstance that they are original types of a thoroughly independent and individual artistic nature and conception, and as such they will ever be recognized.

This is especially the case with the celebrated «Night» but not less so with the Magdalene. If we consider the idea of the motion of this female form it cannot be denied that there is something quite original, not suggested by a mere sense of beauty in this idea, first originated by Correggio of the thoroughly natural position of comfortable repose, which does not remind us of Raphael, Leonardo, Michel Angelo, or of the antique, in short a perfectly Correggio-like invention, a type entirely peculiar to this master.

If we compare with it the Magdalene of Battoni, we are astonished to see how guilelessly innocent, notwithstanding the decidedly greater nudity, the Magdalene of Correggio appears, how really absorbed in her reading, how unconscious of the observer. If, in addition to this, we consider the peculiar illumination and tone, the treatment of the masses of light — a characteristic of this master alone — the poetical surroundings of the landscape, and the wonderful perfection and softness of the execution, we can comprehend that this picture will have an ever renewed value, and ensure a permanent impression on each successive generation. That this valuable picture was, one stormy night in 1788, stolen from the Gallery by an audacious thief, enhances the romantic interest connected with it. Fortunately, it was soon recovered, and the costly silver frame enriched with jewels, which no doubt principally excited the cupidity of the thief, has since then been withdrawn from the fair penitent.



The Tribute Money, by Titian.

(Cat. No. 222. On wood, 0,75 high, 0,56 wide.)

This world renowned picture was painted, according to the account of Vasari in the life of Titian, about the year 1514, for Alphonse I., Duke of Ferrara, an enthusiastic admirer of the great painter, on the door panel of a cabinet appropriated, no doubt, to the conservation of costly articles, possibly relics or similar objects. This picture marks, indeed, an early period of the master, an earlier one even than Vasari's estimation leads us to suppose. It corresponds to the time when the young Titian, on leaving the strict studies of master Bellini, assumed the free independence of his own genius. Now for the first time, he appears in his own peculiar strength, and, with the strictness of the old school, unites the awakening freedom of the new style — the *bella maniera moderna*, as Vasari designates it — with a hitherto unknown and indescribable charm. Depth of belief and truth to nature; ideality and portraiture, for the first time united in striving to produce the highest embodiment of the Christian ideal, and this he reached with a reality never attained by any other master. This is the step of Daedalus from the old to the new style. It is of significance to us with respect to this picture, that Vasari has associated it and other works of the Venetian masters which were in the same room of Duke Alphonse I., in a certain respect, with our Albert Dürer and his stay in Venice. Dürer's astonishing delicacy and skill in the hair and similar details evidently made a great impression on the Venetian masters, and only through such an external impression can we, indeed, explain the circumstance that Titian, precisely in this picture, exhibits, in this respect, a perfection in the execution which he is else far from attaining, and is not noticed in his other works.



Venus, by Titian.

(Cat. No. 225. On canvas, 1,38 high, 2,04 wide.)

Cupid places a wreath on the head of the reposing Venus, at whose feet sits a young man, clad as a page, playing on a lute. Of all similar pictures of Venus by this or any other master, this one is by far the most ideal and most in consonance with our thought that the art of Painting has produced. Only so great a master as Titian, and even he only in the best period of his power, could succeed in producing a work which unites in so high a degree complete ideality with naive individuality and portrait-like fidelity to nature. It was reserved for him alone to elevate the representation of feminine beauty to this height of perfection, for highly as we may esteem similar figures of Raphael, for instance, his Galatea, the goddesses of the Farnesina and others, with regard to their perfection of form and expression, they all fall far short of attaining the charm of colouring with which Titian has succeeded in investing this figure. If, in all the similar representations of the nude female form by Raphael, Michel Angelo, Leonardo, Giulio Romano etc., we constantly and prominently recognise the impress of classic marble forms, the reflection of the antique, in this figure we see a free creation uninfluenced by all foreign ideas, a new conception in the finest sense. Involuntarily, the expressive words which Goethe puts in the mouth of Faust as he stands before the magic mirror of the witch contemplating the ravishing picture of the Greek Helen, will occur to the mind of the German spectator.

«A woman's form, in beauty shining!
Can woman, then, so lovely be?
And must I find her body, there reclining,
Of all the heavens the bright epitome?»

BAYARD TAYLOR.

May not Goethe have really retained a deep impression of this very picture after his first visit to the Dresden Gallery? At all events, all the characteristic beauty and poetical interpretation of this indescribable picture lies in these few words, and only the gifted poet could so understand the gifted painter.



Venus, by Guido Reni.

(Cat. No. 470. On canvas, 1,35 high, 1,76 wide.)

It is scarcely to be doubted that this Venus is nothing more than a reflection of the celebrated Venus of Titian which excited Guido to an imitation. If, with respect to so important a master as Guido, who must unquestionably be acknowledged to be the greatest poet of the school of Carracci, there can be no idea of a mere copy, it is of so much greater interest to observe the difference between the original and the imitation. In the faded and pale manner in which Guido has produced his ideal of female beauty, we see the entire decline from the great and simple principles of the study of nature and its poetical reproduction as followed by Titian in his picture. The movement of the figure is, in general, quite similar to Titian's conception, yet how wanting it is in a harmonious union of the various parts, and in that plastic repose according to the natural law of gravity, and the construction of the human form, which, in Guido's picture assumes a kind of suspended position that is possible only on canvas and not in real life. The deep carnation of the flesh tints of Titian becomes a bloodless, aerial shadow, which finds its harmonious perfection only in a cold universal gray. The head, the best feature of the whole picture, is characterized by that antiquated, vague beauty without individuality, which tires us, and furthermore, the uncommonly fleshy arms do not harmonize with the hueless unsubstantial appearance of the rest of the form. The Cupid, however, is decidedly an unsuccessful figure, who moreover stands so affectedly, which the somewhat forced conceit of examining the point of the dart scarcely justifies. How unaffected and modest, on the contrary, the Cupid of Titian appears, as he places the triumphal wreath of beauty on the head of the goddess, his mother. And the details! The magnificent purple curtain of Titian becomes a faded screen; the beautiful landscape, nothing but a bit of garden; the deep blue overspreading sky, studded with beautiful clouds is turned into a dull atmosphere of leaden gray, such as would not have been expected from an Italian. Nevertheless Guido's picture is a highly creditable specimen of painting, but the poetry of the illustrious period was lost, and even the best masters of the eclectic period could not recall it, and least of all by a conscious imitation.



Ecce homo, by Guido Reni.

(Cat. No. 475. On canvas, 0,79 high, 0,65 wide.)

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For the whole Bolognese school, and particularly for Guido Reni, the most gifted of its masters, the class of prevailing subjects which from the circle of their representations, is especially interesting and characteristic. Guido may, in fact, be regarded as the originator of the Ecce Homo and Mater Dolorosa; at least no one has rendered these subjects more popular than he. This was an effect of the powerful catholic reaction which took place after the Reformation and the council of Trent, and which was denominated new catholicism in contradistinction to the dogma which before that time had been uncontested. A kind of exaggerated pathos and sentimentalism had become apparent in the treatment of those parts of the New Testament which were especially effective, and which, indeed, had been occasionally treated by the older masters but never with any especial design. Now, however, it was chiefly by depicting the suffering and derided Christ and His afflicted Mother that the hearts of believers were to be inflamed to especial fervour of devotion. In our picture the expression is however elevated to a sentimental point only, the true and much deeper strength and simplicity, the earnestness which is required in delineating the Son of God, give place to an alluring expression of conscious artistic beauty. The employment of the antique beauty of form, the suggestion of Laocoon, as well as the intentionally bloodless colouring, contribute still more to the unsubstantial abstraction of the whole, while the excellence of the execution, on the other hand, evince the great abilities of a master like Guido Reni. It is worthy of remark that this subject is not at all treated by Raphael, nor by Leonardo or Michel Angelo in this intentionally prominent manner, while Correggio is the first to depict the so-called Ecce Homo; but even he has treated the subject in the previously usual manner, with Pilate and the attendant soldiers. The older masters employed the so-called sudarium of St. Veronica as the only symbol.

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The Marriage at Cana, by Paolo Veronese.

(Cat. No. 300. On canvas, 2.05 high, 4.51 wide.)

The Marriage at Cana indisputably belongs to the most precious works of this master which the Dresden Gallery possesses. In animated and genial humour, as well as in the most masterly style of representation and excellence of execution it exceeds many of even his most celebrated works. The artist has chosen the moment, when the miraculous wine is placed before the guests; and has depicted in a masterly manner their tasting and astonishment according to their various characters. In the middle of the broad picture, in splendid gold-coloured silk costume is seen the butler, who has just tasted the wine, and his eye still rests with an examining look on the full beaker which, with the air of a connoisseur, he holds at the right distance critically regarding the purity and colour. One can find nothing more truthful or natural than the expressive pose and gesture of the whole figure. Beside him, yet behind the table, a young man is quaffing with relish the delicious beverage in long draughts, while an old gentleman in a sitting attitude turns inquiringly to his neighbour whose glass is being filled by a servant from a large pitcher. Farther to the left of the centre of the picture, are seen the Saviour and the Virgin, who, likewise observing, watches the effect of the miracle which her divin Son has just performed. The bride and bridegroom, of whom we have more of a back view, close the picture on the left side, while on the right, the servants are busied in bringing in another course of the dinner. A white marble hall and the open sky form the cheerful background of the warm, brilliant picture. The masterly freshness and freedom of touch also contribute materially to produce the festal, hymeneal effect of the whole ceremony on the mind of the spectator. The comparatively moderate size, and few, though important groups, the simplified richness of the figures, give it a material advantage over the colossal representations of the same subject in the Academy of Venice and in the Gallery of the Louvre, which in accordance with their size are treated as more decorative pictures.

This picture is one of the hundred paintings obtained for the Dresden Gallery by the Modena purchase, and is, like all the other pictures by this master, in excellent condition, an important result of great technical skill of Veronese whereby only a few of his pictures have somewhat suffered by a false employment of mastic.



Magdalene, by Pietro Rotari.

(Cat. No. 416. On canvas, 0,45 high, 0,35 wide.)

This picture also is one of the favourites of the public as well as of the copyists, and it might be cited as a proof of the sure effect of beautiful upturned feminine eyes on the public in general. It is in every respect a modern physiognomy, but not without a certain species of tasteful grace and attractive charm of the flesh tints, conscientiously and carefully treated. It is true, it is not suggestive of the character of Mary of Magdala, as it appears in the scattered traits mentioned in the gospel, from which christian art has produced one of the finest ideals of true womanhood, to which with the transformation effected by the power of the Divine Master are not wanting the deep shades of human passion in wonderful combination, more surmised than actually known. However, precisely this figure has not escaped the fate of being degraded by some painters to parody, and the Dresden Gallery would furnish proofs enough of this assertion. It is therefore worthy of commendation that Count Rotari, surrounded by the wanton court life of Dresden, was able to invest his Magdalene with at least a modest and delicate expression, and maintain in the whole conception a soft earnestness which was rare enough at that period. With regard to the character of the master, we might mention the old anecdote which relates that he had importuned King Augustus III. that his picture, now in the Gallery — No. 413 of the Catalogue — «Repose on the Flight to Egypt», in which he had, in his own manner, treated Correggio's idea of the light proceeding from the newborn Child, might be hung in the immediate vicinity of Correggio's «Night». King Augustus, in Italian, the language in which the conversation was conducted, jokingly granted his request, in the reply: «Sì, ma in culo.» Si non è vero è ben trovato, may really be applied in this case, but thus much is certain, that the above mentioned picture by the Count was, in the old Gallery, really placed behind the masterpiece of the immortal' Allegri, and hung there to the last.



A Study Head, by Alessandro Varotari, named Padovanino.

(Cat. No. 343. On canvas, 1.09 high, 0.93 wide.)

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It is not perhaps known to every one that under so apparently genuine an Italian name as «Varotari», is hidden a perfectly good German family name, that in the good city of Augsburg was known as «Weihrotter», and perhaps is so still. It was at the same time a family of painters, and one Darius Weihrotter was the first who on emigrating to Padua changed his honest German name into euphonious Italian, to which the rather foreign christian name «Darius» seemed perfectly suitable. Nothing was more natural than that the old father Darius should name his son, Alexander, and thus Alessandro Varotari was complete; and he painted some unquestionably good pictures, obtaining for his name a lasting renown in the history of Art. Of the four pictures, however, belonging to the Dresden Gallery, Judith, Cleopatra and Lucretia this anonymus study head is without doubt by far the best and most interesting. There is, indeed, a peculiarly poetical charm in this serene womanhood looking out from the picture, the attraction of which is heightened still more by the easy fragmentary conception and execution of the painting. This head, so freely and simply reproduced from nature, possesses in a high degree precisely what is wanting in the ideal of the painter, viz. an individuality which in spite of its naturalness, is nevertheless characterized and transformed by a certain ideality. No wonder that it is a general favourite with the public and is one of the class of heads which are constantly copied.

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The Virgin and Child, by Murillo.

(Cat. No. 634. On canvas, 1,67 high, 1,15 wide.)

The Virgin, with eyes directed heavenward, holds on her lap the Infant who turns round with an animated movement. Neither face has anything ideal; the Virgin seems to be a portrait of a Spanish woman, probably the wife of Murillo, as she is quite similar in features to the other Madonnes of this master. The Child has also the features of a real person, yet notwithstanding this, there is in both heads a fine intellectual charm which has made this picture one of the favourites of the public. It is precisely the charm of individuality which invests it with such a decided and ever renewed attraction for the spectator. Added to this is also the sympathetic impression of an extremely harmonious, delicate colouring which, in the flesh tints, falls into the soft silver tone, which the Spanish school derived from their great Netherland contemporaries, especially van Dyck, but which they nevertheless developed in a peculiarly national manner. The deep blue uppvesture of the Virgin; the delicate pale red underdress, and the fine white of the linen of the Child, form, in connexion with the airy carnation, and heavy gray background, an extremely picturesque harmony in the general tone of this celebrated picture. It was acquired in 1755, from the estate of a Mr. Pasquier, Député de Commerce in Rouen.



Portrait of a Man, by Velasquez.

(Cat. No. 624. On canvas, 1,04 high, 0,86 wide.)

This portrait of an unknown, elderly man, completely clad in black, with grave features and short gray hair, and hands merely sketched in chiaroscuro belongs to the finest productions of the celebrated Spanish painter. It was obtained with the Modena purchase, and was at that time considered as a work of Rubens, later it was ascribed to Titian and only in recent times, when, at the beginning of the present century, the Spanish school was more carefully studied, it was given back to its real author. In many of the elder Galleries of Germany there are still pictures of the Spanish school to be found which are ascribed to painters of the Netherlands or Italian school, as they were purchased at a time, when the Spanish school was but little known, and only under the names of well-known masters, as Rubens, van Dyck, Titian etc. could the picture-sellers find purchasers for these works.



The Children of Charles I., by A. van Dyck.

(Cat. No. 987. On canvas, 1,28 high, 1,45 wide,)

The three lovely children of Charles I. of England and his consort, Henrietta Maria, show, in their exquisite grace and truth, the full charm of childhood in its different periods of development. The elder boy, afterwards Charles II., his sister, Maria, and his little brother, James, with their playfellows, a couple of little spaniels, the real King Charles breed, at their side, form in this picture a charming group, the favourite of the public, and especially of every mother. This painting was purchased in Paris in 1744, and probably belonged formerly to the Collection of the Regent, the Duke of Orleans.



Half-Length Portrait of a Man, by Rembrandt.

(Cat. No. 1215. On wood, 0.675 high, 0.525 wide.)

This beautiful portrait is one of the finest of this description of pictures which the Dresden Gallery possesses. It belongs to the artist's first manner, when it was still distinguished by careful perfection in the execution, and is signed with his name and date, 1633. Although some of Rembrandt's earlier pictures, e. g. the two portraits in the Gallery in Brunswick, with the date 1631, exhibit a still more careful, almost fastidious, delicacy, still the picture before us is characterized by greater freedom of touch and decision in execution, which enhances the charm of the liveliest fidelity to nature. In the accessories, — the large lace collar and black doublet — even at this period, the masterly freedom and sketchy character of the later pictures is already predominant. This picture has sometimes been considered as a portrait of the artist himself, which is by no means impossible, as Rembrandt in his portraits always painted with a certain freedom of conception in which the likeness did not by any means appear to him to be the chief requisite, but he endeavoured rather to depict a definite artistical moment of some evanescent light. Hence the great difference in his own portraits, especially in the numerous etchings. The portraits of his wife are also marked by a great variety of form and conception which sometimes goes so far that we can scarcely recognize the same features. The old masters, perhaps with the exception of the German school and that of van Eyck, disregarded a likeness so exact, carefully going into the minutest details, as has at the present day become requisite through photographic reproductions; they were rather accustomed to a certain freedom of conception which left the artist more scope to produce from the restricting subject of a portrait a generally recognized work of art.



A Hermit, by S. Koninx.

(Cat No. 1319. On canvas, 1.23 high, 0.94 wide.)

This is one of those pictures of the most flourishing period of the Dutch school which, by their simple truth and quiet, unassuming character of form and tone, produce a constant charm on the eye of the beholder. A fine looking, silver-haired old man with long, wavy beard, his head resting on his left hand, looks thoughtfully upon a massive book, the contents of which seem to fill his whole soul. The hermits gray raiment, the pale carnation of his complexion and light colour of the hair against the delicately toned landscape in the background, makes an indescribably soft impression of mild colouring, a sort of negative effect which leaves something for the imagination of the beholder to supply; such perhaps as might be suggested by a drawing with light touches of colouring. We frequently find precisely in the Dutch art, works of this kind which in comparison with other pictures of more strength of colouring, especially of other schools, suggest an intentional avoidance of all in any degree decided tones, a morbid shrinking from employing any positive colours, and appear like the opposite pole to the strength and decision apparent in the works of Titian and the best productions of the Venetian school. It is more the play of light than the full gay lustre of colour that the painters of those pictures strove to reproduce. In landscapes, it is especially van Goyen, de Vries and Isaac Ostade who with wonderful skill have produced a peculiarly tender harmony in effect with a very limited scale of gray, yellowish and brownish tones, enlivened by a slight contrast of bluish tones in the sky and clouds, by the side of which almost all other pictures must appear gay and hard. We can, by a more careful attention to this peculiarity of Dutch art, notice how by degrees the disuse, the shrinking from the employment of colour, becomes a morbid tendency to represent everything that can make a vivid impression on the eye, in a species of misty colour, a mode of treatment which, with the imitators of the above-mentioned masters, reached its height as the period of a general decline in Art, the period of pastils, cues and hair powder.



The Expulsion of Hagar, by Adrian van der Werff.

(Cat. No. 1645. On canvas, 0,86 high, 0,70 wide.)

Chevalier Adrian van der Werff, as he signs himself in his paintings, the richly paid, and, already during his lifetime much admired court painter to the Elector of the Palatinate, has, in the *Expulsion of Hagar*, left behind him undoubtedly one of his most important productions; and although we may justly criticize the coquetry and affectation of his style, we must nevertheless admit that this, and most of his pictures, exhibit in their way an astonishing mastery of the pencil which must exercise a powerful effect on the public by the smoothness and perfection of the execution. If we, on the other hand, inquire for the other and principal requisites of a so-called historical picture, the poetry of conception, the vigour of the characteristics, the fidelity to nature in form and colour, the answer is decidedly unfavourable. No one would, in the indolent old grandpapa in his violet dressing gown, recognize the energetic shepherd-prince Abram; in the old grandmamma, the once beautiful Sarah; or in the Medicean Venus in satin toilette, drying her tears with a delicate handkerchief, the beautiful Arabian slave Hagar whom the declining Sarah herself had provided to ensure a legitimate posterity. Still less can we, in the somewhat bowlegged boy whom the perfumed exile is leading by the hand, recognize the wild Ishmael, the forefather of the warlike and predatory archers, the Arabian hordes of the wilderness named in the Bible Ishmaelites. We could more easily discover the characteristic traits of the little Isaac, the branch of later birth, in the spoiled child, who, hidden behind papa and mama, regards with childish malice the banishment of his half-brother, who has no doubt sometimes been an uncomfortable play-fellow. But why should the Düsseldorf court painter and chevalier not have had the same right that has always been accorded to painters, to select and depict his forms from the circle of his own observation. We regard his pictures at the present day with the interest which attaches to the history of civilization in order to be able to read with sufficient clearness the characteristics of the period of their production. We may therefore, all the more unprejudiced, heartily grant to the public their favourites also in this department of painting.



The Vienna Chocolate Girl, by Liotard.

(Cat. No. 2091. On parchment, Coloured crayons.)

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If the Madonnas by Raphael and Holbein, the Magdalene by Battoni, St. Cecilia by Carlo Dolci, the Holy Virgin by Murillo, Amor by Mengs, and other pictures of this class, represent the high Olympus of the Dresden Gallery, the superior gods, there are not wanting also sportive lesser deities, graceful nymphs and demons; and among them one of the most conspicuous, and the same time a local deity, is certainly the neat Chocolate Girl, immortalized by the skilful hand of the Geneva painter, Liotard, and who has become the favourite of the visitors of our Gallery, and in fact of all lovers of art. The winsome, graceful waiting-maid has been, not unjustly, called the emblem of Dresden, for she is met with in innumerable copies, large and small, good and bad, on porcelaine and metal, on labels for chocolate and soap, and all other possible and impossible articles in thousands and perhaps millions, which bear the fame of the little beauty daily and hourly over land and sea. The fortunate artist little thought when he painted her, the little divinity, that she would confer on him, or he on her an immortal name in the spirit of the ever renewed present, a fame that much more important personages and much greater works of art have never possessed and can never hope to attain. That the beautiful original was highly esteemed by her contemporaries is at least indicated by the ever repeated, though indeed somewhat legendary story, that the pretty chocolate girl soon became a countess Dietrichstein, who in sportive joy at her own elevation, with graceful stateliness on her wedding day admitted the whole assemblage of servants, her former equals, to kiss her hand, saying: "Behold! at present I am a countess, now kiss my hand!"

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Cupid, by Mengs.

(Cat. No. 2086. On parchment, coloured crayons.)

Among the celebrated pastils by Mengs, perhaps the most celebrated is the Cupid, who, glancing upward with a pleasing childlike little countenance, is occupied in testing the gold on the point of his dart with a touchstone; for only the unalloyed gold of the heavenly dart of love possesses a permanent, happy and healing power on the pierced heart of man; every false metal produces only a diseased or possibly even deadly effect. So, at least, runs the legend in the philosophy of love, and the theory finds confirmatory examples in practice the more easily, as it is only necessary to point to such as corroborate it, and where the result is unfortunate, affirme boldly that the momentous dart was just one of those not tipped with the real gold. Considered as a work of art, it must be admitted that the pleasing picture possesses a certain charm which is associated with childhood, added to which is an earnest and conscientious care in the execution which distinguishes all the works of this conscientious painter. He alone has understood how to lend to pastil colours a strength and clearness which no one since him has attained, and again, photography is eminently successful in reproducing just these velvety colours which the smoothness of oil paintings does not possess, and, in copying, gives to crayons the strength of oil colours.



The Vestal Virgin, by Angelica Kauffmann.

(Cat. No. 1979. On canvas, 0,89 high, 0,72 wide.)

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This picture belongs to that class which, after a period of undervaluation, becomes at another time as much overestimated; as, for instance, is also the case with the works of the French painter J. B. Greuze. Both were, during the prevalence of the so called pre-Raphaelite tendency, with full justice considered to be productions of a too effeminate sentimentality, and unnatural mannerism; while, in fact, the good qualities of both, a certain grace and an artistic freedom, were too little appreciated. At present, the above mentioned picture has indeed again become a favourite with the public, and the sentimental lady in the costume of a Vestal Virgin, or rather in what is was determined to be at the end of the last century, is reproduced in innumerable copies. We might easily imagine the features of some actual person under the graceful mask, as possibly those of the celebrated Lady Hamilton, or of the well-known Hendel-Schütz, who, still later, as a Vestal, or even as a Sphinx and other characters, in tableaux vivants by lamplight delighted the art loving and artistic world of noble and cultivated society in their companies after the tea had been served, which exhibitions were fully justified by the beauty of the performers. Thus our appreciation of works of art exhibits an uncertain wavering between too great and too little, and, at last, in all things even the highest, the scale of human justice is dependant on the impressions of the time, and the inclinations of the individual.

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May critics in every department so much the more candidly acknowledge this human imperfection from which they are themselves not wholly free.

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